

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KABUL

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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EXDIS, CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, AF, IN, PK

SUBJECT: INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS AND REGIONAL STABILITY

REF: KABUL 1968; NEW DELHI 4482; ISLAMABAD 3248

1. DEPARTMENT HAS CAREFULLY CONSIDERED YOUR USEFUL REPORT OF CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR MEHTA, AS WELL AS TIMELY COMMENTS OF NEW DELHI AND ISLAMABAD ON GROWING INDO-AFGHAN COOPERATION, ITS IMPACT ON REGIONAL POLITICS AND PROPOSED USG ATTITUDE. WHILE THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE OBVIOUS POSITIVE ASPECTS, ESPECIALLY IN CURRENT SITUATION, THERE IS NEGATIVE POTENTIAL, PARTICULARLY RELATED TO IMPLICATIONS OF INDIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

2. ON PLUS SIDE ARE (1) POSSIBLE INDIAN BRAKE ON ANY AFGHAN ADVENTURISM ON PUSHTUNISTAN AND (2) GOA ALTERNATIVE TO TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON USSR IN MILITARY MATTERS. HOWEVER, AS

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ISLAMABAD NOTES, GOP LIKELY TO VIEW THIS RELATIONSHIP AS

EFFORT TO OUTFLANK OR DIPLOMATICALLY ISOLATE PAKISTAN. AS RECENT REPORTING SUGGESTS, DAOUD GOVERNMENT, WHILE REFRAINING FROM OVERT ACTIONS ON PUSHTUNISTAN DISPUTE, MAY BE TRYING TO BUILD UP GOA'S POLITICAL/DIPLOMATIC STANDING IN EFFORT TO INCREASE LEVERAGE ON PAKISTAN IN ANY FUTURE FLAREUP OR CRISIS. ALSO NOTEWORTHY

IN THIS CONNECTION ARE RECENT GOA AND GOI EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TIES WITH IRAN. TO EXTENT PAKISTAN FEELS ITSELF ISOLATED IN REGION AREA INSTABILITY COULD BE INCREASED.

3. OVER LONGER RUN, IMPACT OF INDO-AFGHAN COOPERATION, ESPECIALLY IN MILITARY FIELD, ON REGIONAL STABILITY MAY ALSO HAVE NEGATIVE SIDE. AS LONG AS INDO-PAK RELATIONS ARE RELATIVELY GOOD, GOI WOULD PRESUMABLY BE MOTIVATED TO RESTRAIN ANY AFGHAN ADVENTURISM ON PUSHTUNISTAN. HOWEVER, GIVEN HISTORY OF INDO-PAK RELATIONS, WE HAVE TO ALLOW FOR POSSIBILITY OF DETERIORATION. IN TIMES OF STRAIN WE ASSUME THAT INDIAN INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD BE USED TO STIR UP RATHER THAN BE CALM PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS.

4. IN VIEW OF ABOVE, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU, AS OPPORTUNITY ARISES, TO LET AMBASSADOR MEHTA KNOW THAT WE WELCOME ANY EFFORTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL STABILITY AND TO AFGHAN RESTRAINT ON PUSHTUNISTAN. BELIEVE YOU SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, SAY ANYTHING THAT WOULD LEAD INDIANS TO BELIEVE WE ENDORSE PROCESS OF MILITARY COOPERATION. AT SAME TIME, YOU SHOULD, AS NEW DELHI SUGGESTS, KEEP OPEN THIS USEFUL WINDOW ON GOI THINKING AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO AFGHANISTAN. KISSINGER

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